

## A SANTA CRUZ PIONEER HAS DIED

On February 19, 1997, Mrs. Elfriede Horneman passed away in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Friedel Vonka, near Kirkenes, in the north of Norway, where she had been living for a number of years. She would have been ninety years old in October.

Born in Frankfort as Elfriede Engelmann, she learned to speak several languages and worked as a secretary, until she met Jacob Hersleb Horneman, a Norwegian mining engineer, in England in 1938. The two married and went to Galápagos, where Horneman had owned property in the Santa Cruz highlands since 1927.

The slender city girl soon became a tough, hard-working Galápagos pioneer, adapting to the primitive conditions and making the best of what the island had to offer. One of her first actions was to change the name of the Horneman property from "Progreso" to the more realistic "Vilnis," Norwegian for "wilderness," then laboring hard to keep the place from living up to its new name.

Though she began suffering from back problems, which caused her considerable pain, Mrs. Horneman continued working, even learning to lay bricks and wield

the machete. However, she always kept a bright smile and a brave optimism, no matter how bad things could seem. Thus, she raised two children, a daughter and a son, and kept things going.

As if this were not enough, she also offered hearty hospitality to every visitor, and many well known people found a welcome in her home: Thor Heyerdahl, Robert Bowman, Eric Shipton, Sven Gilsäter of Swedish TV, E. Yale Dawson, and many others. However, her hospitality was offered with equal generosity to the poor and unknown visitor or to fellow settlers who happened to come to the Horneman home. As the years went by, she gradually became known as "Mutti" to many of these friends.

Mrs. Horneman finished translating Dr. Stein Hoff's excellent history on the Norwegian settlers in the Galápagos, *Drømmen om Galápagos* (The Dream about Galápagos), from the Norwegian original to English. Unfortunately, she died before seeing this work in print.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to know her feel her death as a great personal loss.

*J. P. Lundh.*

## GERARD CORLEY SMITH

*Gerard Corley Smith,  
CMG, former Ambassador to Ecuador,  
died on October 7 aged 88. He was born on  
July 30, 1909.*

Although he had a long and distinguished career in the diplomatic service, Gerard Corley Smith will be particularly remembered for his close involvement with the cause of conservation in the Galapagos Islands. His association with the islands began in 1962, when as Ambassador to Ecuador he attended the official opening of the Charles Darwin Research Station, and gained an insight into the unique wonders of that archipelago and the strenuous efforts being made to safeguard them for the future. It was a cause that he was to espouse for the rest of his life.

Gerard Thomas Corley Smith was educated at Bolton School and Emmanuel College, Cambridge. In 1931 he entered the General Consular Service, and over the next 15 years he served in Paris, Oran, Detroit, La Paz, Milan, St Louis and Brussels. He first came to international at-

tention in 1949 when, as the British representative on the UN Economic and Social Council in New York, he was chosen to present the case against the Soviet forced labour camps, or gulags, the existence of which was only then beginning to be revealed to the world. It was a task that predictably earned him the anger and disapproval of the Eastern bloc delegations and their press.

Corley Smith returned to Europe in 1952, and in the same year was appointed CMG. His next posting was to Paris, where he served for two years as press counsellor at the British Embassy. From there he went to Madrid to take up the appointment as labour counsellor at the British Embassy, 1954-59.

With his wide experience, Corley Smith became Ambassador to Haiti in 1960. It was not an easy posting, nor could it have been under the harrowing and deeply oppressive regime of François ("Papa Doc") Duvalier. Years later, Corley Smith would recall his affection for the ordinary Haitian people, who greeted him with their friendly "Bonjour Blanc!" (a Creole expression for "Hello, stranger!") as he took himself bird-watching in the hills.

But the misrule there, the mistrust he saw, and the "atmosphere of brooding terror" became increasingly hard to bear.

Once again, Corley Smith was chosen as spokesman, this time for a delegation of ambassadors protesting against the extortion being practised on foreigners by the Tontons Macoute, Duvalier's infamous bogeymen and secret police. When he was asked by the Haitian Minister for Foreign Affairs who was doing the extortion, Corley Smith replied "the Tontons Macoute." "Who are they? I never heard of them," objected the Minister, himself a Macoute. When Corley Smith said he need only ask the first person he met on the street, he was given 48 hours to leave the country, on Duvalier's order. The beleaguered regime added: "The Haitian Government has made it known to this famous ambassador . . . that his impertinence and haughtiness as a British colonialist would not be tolerated."

Corley Smith's next appointment was to Ecuador in 1962. In Quito he found an altogether more congenial atmosphere, and unlimited scope in the country around him to pursue his interest in ornithology. Staff at the embassy soon took it as a matter of course that his official duties would be interspersed with bird-watching trips to the Andes.

An interest in high-altitude hummingbirds brought him into contact with Professor Jean Dorst of the French National Museum of Natural History in Paris, an authority on these birds who was also President of the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands.

A second journey to Galapagos followed in 1964, when Corley Smith joined the Duke of Edinburgh during his first visit to the archipelago on the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. It was a visit that had repercussions for both men. The Duke would later become patron of the Charles Darwin Foundation; the ambassador "became hooked on Galapagos."

Throughout his remaining time in Ecuador, Corley Smith took a discreet but influential part in Galapagos affairs, embracing the idea that wildlife-orientated tourism could be the key to economic stability for the islands, and helping to engineer the Grimwood-Snow Mission

and Report, which gave recommendations for the administration for the future national park.

Corley Smith left Ecuador in 1967, and the following year the new National Parks Service of Ecuador came into existence. The newly retired ambassador was lured to join the executive council of the Charles Darwin Foundation. The first meeting he attended was in England, at Down House, Darwin's former home, where members saw in the tall, silver-haired and distinguished-looking former diplomat a remarkable likeness to the portrait there of T. H. Huxley. In 1972, when Sir Thomas Barlow stepped down, Corley Smith took on the role of secretary-general of the foundation. It was a great coup for the ever-persuasive Dorst.

Over the next ten years Corley Smith served the foundation diligently and wholeheartedly. Those who worked with him during that period cherish the memory of his quiet skill in handling complex problems, his sage advice, and the bravado with which he ran the show "from an attic bedroom, with one typist paid (and badly) by the hour." In addition, he edited, published and distributed 24 "well-nourished" issues of the foundation's bulletin *Noticias de Galápagos*.

It was a buoyant period in Galapagos affairs. With his natural optimism and his gratitude to successive Ecuadorean administrations for their commitment to international science, Corley Smith helped to forge the remarkable alliance that grew between the national Government and this voluntary organisation. "Most crucially," as Dorst later wrote, "he perceived and understood the way the foundation had to meet and adapt to changing conditions in Ecuador."

On his retirement from the post of secretary-general, Corley Smith was awarded the Order "Al Mérito" by the Government of Ecuador for his services to science and conservation in the Galapagos Islands.

Corley Smith married Joan Haggard in 1937. She predeceased him, but he is survived by a son and three daughters.

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